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EDITORIALS*

GOVERNOR ROLPH SIGNS A. B. 477 (NIELSEN) FOR STATE MEDICAL LIBRARIES

California State Medical Library Bill (A. B. 477—Nielsen) Was Signed by Governor James J. Rolph, Jr., on June 9, 1931.—The date of June 9, 1931, is one which should have a place in the annals of the California Medical Association, for on that day Governor James J. Rolph, Jr., signed A. B. 477 (Nielsen), thus enacting into law the recent act of the legislature which provides for the institution and maintenance, under the University of California, of a state medical library having major branches at San Francisco and Los Angeles.

For this approval which Governor Rolph gave to the state medical libraries act, the people of the State and the medical profession also, have reason to be grateful. Such medical libraries should and no doubt will become real factors in the betterment of the public health in California and in the maintenance of high educational standards and activities.

In last month's (June) issue of this journal, page 417, a brief history of this particular legislative act was sketched. To those who were giving special attention to the measure, it was a great relief when Governor Rolph attached his signa-

ture to A. B. 477, and our thanks are extended him for giving his approval to the measure.

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Text of the Bill Is Printed in This Number of California and Western Medicine.—The full text of that act, for the convenience of those readers who are interested, is printed in the Miscellany department of this number of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE (page 68).

Details concerning the institution of these state medical libraries cannot be given at this time, because the act will not become operative until September 9, 1931, after which time President Robert G. Sproul of the University of California will no doubt call his advisory committee together to discuss ways and means whereby the largest and most efficient type of service may be instituted.

* * *

The State Library Act Also Provides for "Exhibits."—A perusal of the measure will indicate its broad scope. The library work can be carried on not only through books and other publications but through "exhibits." In other words the educational activities, insofar as medical and public health education are concerned, are not solely restricted to books and publications. In our present day and for the future, such latitude is especially desirable; and in this instance it is hoped will work out to definite advantage in public health work. Exhibits which can be used in the education of members of the medical profession, can be made valuable also to members of the lay public, if properly presented. As Doctor E. Starr Judd of the Mayo Foundation, in his this year's presidential address to the American Medical Association (*Journal American Medical Association*, June 13, 1931, page 2007) stated:

"The idea of medical education for the public is not a new one, but the importance of it is more fully realized now than it was in former years The consensus among members of the medical profession generally is that some sort of publicity should be supplied by which the public will be made to understand the nature, the purposes and the results of the efforts made by scientific medicine for prevention and control of disease."

A library exists for the better dissemination of human knowledge, and since exhibits of scientific studies promote the dissemination of such knowledge it is possible that the provision of exhibits in the California State Medical Library Act may be productive of much good.

* * *

Major Function of the State Medical Libraries Will Be to Provide a "Package Library Service."

—So far as the editor knows, it is not the intention to use any of the fifty thousand dollar appropriation for the erection of buildings, because the University of California fortunately can utilize some of its present housing facilities. Nor probably will it be deemed desirable to have reading rooms in San Francisco and Los Angeles, since such reading room facilities are quite ample at the University of California, Stanford and the

* Editorials on subjects of scientific and clinical interest, contributed by members of the California Medical Association, are printed in the Medicine Today column which follows.

Barlow medical libraries. It may be stated that the original intent of the plan was to have the state medical library, through its major branches at San Francisco and Los Angeles, to act more particularly as a distributing agency for the publications in the three libraries just named, through what is known as a "package library service." In other words, the thought was to make it possible for all medical men and women in California to feel perfectly free, as tax paying citizens, to avail themselves of the privileges of this state institution, which through the state university, would bring to all licensed physicians and surgeons who so requested, the latest medical literature on any indicated subjects.

The advisory board, in addition to President Sproul of the University of California, will consist of four physicians who are in active practice, each of whom has had considerable organization and institutional experience. Therefore it may be taken for granted that the plans of procedure recommended by them will be of a practical nature.

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Thanks to All Who Aided in the Passage and Approval of the State Medical Library Act.—In leaving the subject, we wish again to thank all who aided in the passage of Assembly Bill 477. The successful outcome is gratifying not only because of the great possibilities in the Library Act itself, but as demonstrating that with a cause having merit, and with clear thinking and action, much of what seems impossible from the standpoint of possible legislative action may, nevertheless, be accomplished.

RABIES IN CALIFORNIA*

The 1909-1916 Outbreak of Human Rabies in California.—In this journal in 1913 and again in several issues of the year 1916, Dr. J. C. Geiger, then with the Bureau of Hygiene of the California State Board of Health and now with the Hooper Foundation for Medical Research of the University of California, printed several important papers on outbreaks of rabies in California.

From page 315 of the August 1913 *California State Journal of Medicine* (for that was the name of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE at that time), we quote from Geiger's opening paragraph:

"In an article written in 1910, Black and Powers reported a small outbreak of rabies among dogs in Los Angeles in 1898. They also reported a fatal human case in Pasadena in 1899 and another outbreak of rabies among dogs in the Soldiers' Home near Los Angeles in 1906. In Stimson's report on rabies, published in 1910, California was declared to be one of the states that was free from the disease. In 1909 the present epidemic began to attract attention and two articles by Sawyer show the spread of the disease up to April 1, 1912. The spread of rabies has been continuous and rapid throughout the state. The toll of human deaths has been eighteen and the loss of valuable livestock has been considerable. Organized

efforts have been made to check its progress, but the lack of coöperation on the part of the county officials, and a bitter opposition from other sources, have greatly retarded the work so far. The presence of rabies in any given community will cause considerable excitement and the passage of numerous laws, which in time are forgotten."

From the June 1916 number, page 230, the following:

"The first case of rabies in human beings in California occurred in March, 1899, and was reported by Radebaugh. The remaining cases, thirty-three in all, occurred during the epidemic of rabies that, since 1909, has swept completely through California. Colburn, Black and Powers, Sawyer and myself reported that up to April 1, 1913, the toll of human deaths from rabies in California was eighteen. Between April 1, 1913, and March 31, 1916, there were fifteen cases."

Again from the July 1916 number, page 276, may be quoted:

"Since 1909, and until recently, rabies has been epidemic in California. Despite the dissemination of knowledge in regard to the control of the disease, rabies among animals in California steadily increased. The height of the epidemic has been reached and passed, and rabies may be considered under control except in Modoc and Lassen counties. This is partly due to the peculiar tendency of an epidemic of rabies to spend itself, the measures instituted for control, and the fact that the disease has become endemic in the more populous communities.

"The advent of the disease in coyotes in Modoc and Lassen counties, which was accomplished through infection traveling from Oregon and Nevada, was made the basis of a remarkable campaign against these animals by the California State Board of Health. The financial loss in livestock alone in Modoc and Lassen counties from rabies places this disease in the forefront as the enemy of the cattle and sheep men. Therefore, the prompt eradication of rabies is a necessity, both in city and rural communities, because of the serious element of human danger on the one hand, as shown by the large number of deaths from rabies in human beings in California, and from an economic standpoint on the other, as shown by the experience of Modoc and Lassen counties."

In a supplementary report in the December 1916 number, Geiger stated:

"In a previous article, the number of cases of rabies in human beings in California was reported as thirty-four. A report of two additional cases, making thirty-six in all, is given."

* * *

The Recent Outbreak of Rabies in Los Angeles County.—In the last several months, the newspapers of Los Angeles County have given considerable publicity to a new outbreak of rabies, with one human death recorded therefrom. In the correspondence column of this number are printed letters sent in at the request of the editor, which give some sidelights on the present rabies situation in California. The directors of the State Board of Health and of the health departments of Los Angeles County and City gave early attention to the recent outbreak, and their efforts to educate the public in regard thereto, as is usually the case, promptly resulted in the self-injection into the picture, of representatives and spokesmen of the lay humane and antivivisection and similar societies. In the conferences which were held with the Los Angeles City Council these, rather than medical organizations, seemed to be the dominating elements.

* Editor's Note.—For interesting rabies statistics received from the health departments of Los Angeles County and of Los Angeles City, see letters in the Correspondence Column of this issue of California and Western Medicine, page 69.